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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 OSLO 000459

SIPDIS

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COPE

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SUBJECT: NORWAY'S RESPONSE: ASSISTING AFGHANISTAN BEYOND
THE AUGUST PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

REF: SECSTATE 74362

Classified By: Acting Charge Hilary Olsin-Windecker for reasons 1.4(b)
and (d).

11. (C) Summary: In meetings with A/DCM and PolOff July 21, MOD and MFA Officials described on-going military and civilian contributions and outlined previously announced 2010 pledges to the UN's Law and Order Trust Fund and the expanded NATO ANA Trust Fund. The MFA is reviewing an option to co-locate its 15 PRT civilians with the UN office in Faryab. Norway is also working to staff and train up an initial Police Mentoring Team, which is scheduled to begin operations in January 2010 at the earliest. Both MOD and MFA contacts emphasized the importance of capacity-building efforts to ensure Afghans develop the skills necessary to govern their country effectively. Comment: Post anticipates that Norway will remain a steadfast NATO and coalition partner in Afghanistan for the foreseeable future, with the upcoming September 2009 Norwegian national elections expected to have limited or no impact on current Afghanistan contributions. End Summary.

Civilian Contribution

12. (SBU) MFA Assistant Director General Kristin Enstad, Af/Pak Senior Advisor Helene Sand Andresen, and North America/Security Policy Senior advisor Anne Kjersti Froholm told A/DCM and PolOff July 21 that Norway applauds the USG's re-invigorated effort in Afghanistan, in particular the shift toward direct support to the Afghan government and to UNAMA. Although Norway has no new pledges for civilian contributions at this time, Enstad said that the GON has a steady commitment to provide NOK 750 million (about USD 120 million) per year through 2012 to support such GOA priorities as rural development, education, and good governance. This level represents a 50% increase over 2007 levels, and most of the assistance will be channeled through the Government of Afghanistan, the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, UN agencies, and a variety of NGO's. The GON will double the funds it provides to the UN's Law and Order Trust Fund from USD five million in 2009 to USD ten million in 2010. She concluded by noting that she expected Norway to assess its financial contributions again this fall, including the Afghan government's June 22 request for 55 additional advisors in various sectors. She emphasized Norway's belief that capacity-building (as opposed to "capacity-substitution" delivered directly by external international actors) is key to achieving a peaceful and stable Afghanistan.

13. (C) DG Enstad also updated us on the status of Norway's idea to consider co-locating its 15-member civilian PRT Meymaneh team with the UN office in Faryab. The plan,

currently under review, would keep the civilians' living quarters at the PRT in Meymaneh, requiring them to drive daily to their offices in town. Andresen said she was waiting to review the Norwegian military's assessment on possible security arrangements, and noted that a final decision as to whether and when civilian staff's offices would be re-located would be made by Foreign Minister Stoere. If approved, the move would be designed to demonstrate the normalizing of Norway's presence in Afghanistan.

Military Contribution

¶4. (C) MOD Director for Security Policy Svein Efjestad, accompanied by MOD Desk Officer, Commander Yngve Skoglund and MOD Advisor Kirsten Gislesen, emphasized to A/DCM, PolOff, and Army Attach July 21 that Norway will remain steadfast in its military contributions to Afghanistan. He described Norway's planned support, through funds and provision of military officers, to the German-led military engineer school in Mazar-e Sharif, and repeated Prime Minister Stoltenberg's April 2009 announcement of an additional USD 20 million to support the Afghan National Army through the expanded NATO Trust Fund. Efjestad also mentioned that Norway will provide a C130J to support ISAF operations and to transport Norwegian troops in country. He echoed Enstad's comments by noting the importance of shifting both military and civilian assistance to focus on building Afghanistan's capacity to govern and secure itself effectively.

Nordic OMLT?

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¶5. (C) Efjestad outlined plans to establish a Nordic Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT) with Sweden and Finland that would take full responsibility for one brigade in RC-North. He said efforts were off to a slow start, complicated by Sweden's on-going assessment of its operations in Afghanistan, and by shifts in Afghan Army plans for future brigade deployments. Efjestad said Norway would continue to push for a Nordic OMLT; however, he doesn't expect a final decision until later this year. (Norway already leads one fully Norwegian OMLT and contributes 17 personnel to one other OMLT.)

First Norwegian Police Mentoring Team in Development

¶6. (SBU) Enstad and Efjestad both described efforts to establish a police mentoring team, slated to become active sometime after January 2010. Ideally, eight military police and two to four civilian police would make up the mentoring team, however Efjestad noted that more military police may have to fill the void created by the short-staffed Norwegian civilian police. Military members of the team are already trained; however, civilian police have not yet been identified, let alone trained. The team is coordinated by an Norwegian inter-ministerial taskforce composed of MOD, MOJ, and MFA. Originally, the police mentoring team was to be deployed under EUPOL, but will now instead coordinate through the Afghan MOI and the Combined Security Transition Command. The biggest challenges appear to be security and logistics, as the team would travel through Faryab province and co-locate with the Afghan police. The MFA's Enstad said the GON hopes to have up to two additional police mentoring teams active next year, but that even if that hope is realized, the needs of the Afghan police far outstrip the assistance that could be provided through mentoring. She concluded by wryly noting that the police are so sparsely resourced in Faryab that they have no buildings or real estate to speak of. There is therefore no easy way to "co-locate" with them until temporary structures can be built.

17. (C) Comment: The GON remains strongly committed to success in Afghanistan and can be expected to remain a steadfast, reliable NATO partner, not least demonstrated by three officials each attending both the MFA and the MOD meetings in the middle of Norway's July holiday season. Norway sees its role more as running a long-term marathon, not a sprint, and is therefore not likely to jump in with large new assistance levels. Instead, the GON will likely remain flexible and capable of adjusting its assistance efforts to support the outcomes of the on-going GOA civilian assessment and the needs of the post-election Afghan government. Norway will hold national elections September 14; however, no dramatic shifts in Norway's contributions to Afghanistan are expected at this point, regardless of the election outcome here. End Comment.
OLSIN-WINDECKER